

Forbes



BRIAN HEYWORTH

HSBC



Eric Mack (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/ericmack/>) Contributor

I cover science and innovation and products and policies they create.

Opinions expressed by Forbes Contributors are their own.

TECH (TECHNOLOGY) 4/30/2014 @ 11:55AM | 37,153 views

Samsung Is Undisputed King Of Smartphones; Apple Still Distant Second

[Comment Now](#) [Follow Comments](#)

The fact that Samsung stands atop the global smartphone heap isn't new information, but the sheer volume of smartphones the Korean company has shipped so far this year is staggering. With the [Galaxy S5](#)

Forbes (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/ericmack/2014/04/16/samsung-galaxy-s5-is-ready-battling-the-iphone-6/>) just beginning to ship, Samsung's total shipment volume for the first quarter of the year came to 85 million smartphone units, more than the next four competitors — [Apple](#) ([/companies/apple/](#)) [AAPL +1.44% \(/companies/apple/\)](#), [Huawei](#), [Lenovo](#) and [LG](#) — combined.

That's according to data released this week by [IDC](#) (<http://www.idc.com/getdoc.jsp?containerId=prUS24823414>) that finds total global smartphone shipments of 281.5 million units, up from 218.8 million in the first quarter of last year, but down by around 8 million units from the last quarter of 2013, which included the holiday shopping season following the fall releases of several new phones, including the iPhone 5S and 5C, as well as Samsung's Galaxy Note 3.

Apple maintained a healthy but distant second place showing to Samsung in the first quarter of 2014, shipping 43.7 million phones. [Huawei](#), [Lenovo](#) and [LG](#) all shipped between 12 and 14 million units each.



Samsung Galaxy S5 (Photo credit: Janitors)

The keys to Samsung's kingdom aren't a huge secret. The company wields a huge marketing budget, a global presence and perhaps most importantly and unlike Apple, it seeks to be all things to all consumers. Samsung offers a dizzying array of devices in myriad shapes and sizes for all budgets, from the high-end flagship Galaxy S5 and Galaxy Note to larger and more affordable phablets like the Galaxy Mega or even the new Samsung Galaxy K Zoom, one of the few smartphones with an optical zoom lens. There are also mini and "Active" variants of the Galaxy S series, Samsung military spec phones, and even a few models with a physical keyboard to choose from.

Apple, on the other hand, releases no more than two new models per year with no official variants to speak of. This approach is arguably the more efficient way to make money, as Apple manages to nearly triple the market capitalization of [Samsung Electronics](#) ([/companies/samsung-electronics/](#)) — the company is worth more than half a trillion dollars — while producing far fewer products.

Forbes

But there is a danger that Samsung's strategy of offering everything to everyone could one day begin to lure even the most dedicated Apple fan, if only for reasons of economics and being more compatible with an increasingly Android-based world. Of course, the demise of Apple also doesn't seem to be anywhere on the horizon, either.



To jock in to my brain and get more on the latest in science, tech and innovation, follow me here on Forbes, as well as on Twitter @ericcmack (<http://twitter.com/EricCMack>) and on Google+ (<https://plus.google.com/u/0/100364844226863135021/posts>).



34 comments, 17 called-out

Comment Now

Follow Comments

Promoted Stories



• 1.

[Warren Buffett Reveals How](#)[Anyone With \\$40 Can Become A Millionaire](#) 3 weeks ago [fool.com](#) [The Motley Fool](#) [Fool.com](#) (sponsored)